complex which include financial difficulties, managerial incompetance and negligence, obsolete plant and machinery etc.

(b) and (c) Government have taken a number of steps to ensure the viability of the textile industry like permiting closure of non-viable mills, monitoring of sickness, the setting up a Nodal Agency to examine sick textile mills in order to ascertain whether they are viable or not, institutional assistance to sick but potentially viable units, the setting up of the Textile Modernisation Fund etc.

Defforestation in the country

237. DR. R. K PODDAR:
SHRI MOSTAFA BIN QUASEM:

Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state:

(a) whether he expressed concern at a meeting in Nairobi about the alarming situation arising out of deforestation in the country creating social, economical and ecological stresses and if so, what measures have been taken to meet the situation;

(b) what are the results of those measures; and

(c) what are the details of the machineries through which these measures are being implemented?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRI Z. R. ANSARI): (a) Yes, Sir. A statement indicating the measures taken by the Government of India to meet the situation is enclosed. (See below).

(b) The rate of afforestation has been stepped up and has reached 1.7 million hectares in 1986-87. The annual rate of diversion of forest land for no-forest purposes has come down to 6500 hectares. Protection of forests has been intensified. Substitution of wood by other products is taking place.

(c) These measures are being implemented through

(i) National Wasteland Development Board
(ii) Department of Enivronment, Forests & Wildlife
(iii) Department of Rural Development
(iv) Department of Agriculture and Cooperation
(v) Department of Non-conventional Energy Resources
(vi) Ministry of Petroleum and Natural Gas
(vii) Voluntary Organisations, Schools Mahila Mandalies Cooperatives & similar other agencies

} of the Government of India & Corresponding Departments of States/UT's

Statement

Steps taken by Government of India to meet the situation:—

1. National Wasteland Development Board has been set up during 1985 with the object of bringing 5 million hectares of land every year under fuel wood and fodder plantation.

(2. Soil, water and tree conservation in the Himalayas (Operation Soil watch) and other afforestation programmes.

3. Guidelines have been issued to the State Governments:

(i) to avoid clarfelling of natural forests and where such fellings are inevitable for restoration of

crop or other all agricultural consideration, it should be restricted to areas not exceeding 10 ha. in the hills and 25 ha. in the plains.

(ii) to consider banning of felling in the hills above 1000 metres at least for some years.

(iii) to identify critical areas in the hills and mountains which require protection from fulling of forests and need immediate vigorous afforestation.

(iv) to set apart 4 per cent of the geographical areas as protection areas like wildlife sanctuaries national parks, biosphere reserves etc.

4. Development of instructure and enforcement of legal provisions for the protection of forest.

5. Enactment of the Forest (Cons.) Act, 1980 to check diversion of forest land to non-forest purposes.

6. Control of shifting cultivation.

7 Development of alternative sources of energy to replace fuelwood in domestic and commercial sectors.

8. Substitution of wood by alternative materials in packaging railway sleepers and building construction.

9. Liberalised import policy for forest products.

10. Fiscal incentives to industry which lead to wood substitution.

11. The Forest Survey of India has been established to survey forests and prepare periodically comprehensive reports on the State of Forests.

238. [*Transferred to the 3rd August 1987*]

Import of oil seeds

239. SHRI CHIMANBHAI MEHTA: Will the Minister of COMMERCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Government are considering to import oil seeds instead of edible oils; if so, what are the details of the proposal and the varities of the seeds;

(b) whether any saving of foreign exchange will be made as a result of the proposal; if so, what are the details thereof;

(c) how Government propose to safeguard the interests of public distribution system against possibilities of inferior quality of oil and likely exploitation by the crushing industry at home; and

(d) whether any Committee has been appointed to examine the merits of the proposal; if so, who are the members of the committee and what is the scope of examination?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE (SHRI P. R. DAS MUNSHI): (a) The proposal for import of oil seeds instead of edible oils has not been agreed to by the Government.

(b) to (d) Do not arise.

Communal Riots

240. SHRI CHIMANBHAI MEHTA:
SHRI RAMSINGHBHAI PATALIYABHAI RATHVAKOLI:

Will the Minister of HOME AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) what are the details of communal clashes that have taken place during the last six months in the country alongwith the figures of casualities, injuries and damages to property;

(b) what are the reasons for which communal riots are frequently taking place in Ahmedabad and Baroda as compared to other towns and cities;

(c) whether it is a fact that anti-social elements, bootleggers, smugglers etc: play a very nefarious role during the riots;

(d) whether it is also a fact that at some places these bootleggers and smugglers act in collaboration with the authorities and politicians; and

(e) whether Government are considering any action to break this nexus; if so, what are the details thereof?